Specific policy for undeveloped districts

3118. MS. MABEL REBELLO:
SHRI B.J. PANDA:

Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Centre proposes to devise specific policy intervention for districts with chronic unemployment and industrial under-development in the country;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the Centre has collected the details of such districts; and

(d) if so, the details of such districts located in Orissa, which are proposed to be developed from generation of employment point of view?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF INDUSTRIAL POLICY AND PROMOTION, MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRI ASHWANI KUMAR): (a) and (b) Various studies in the past have sought to identify industrially backward regions in the country. More recently, with a view to focus on districts specific cases of industrial backwardness, inter-departmental meetings have been held and the relevant data available is being analysed to finalise and implement concreate policy decisions to address purposively the causes of industrial backwardness in various districts in a calibrated manner.

(c) and (d) In 2005, Planning Commission has identified 170 most backward districts in the country for the purpose of redressing growing regional imbalances. Out of 170 districts in the country, 15 backward districts are in Orissa namely Balangir, Baudh, Debagarh, Gajapati, Ganjam, Kalahandi, Kandhmal, Kendujhar, Koraput, Malkangiri, Mayurbhanj, Nabrangapur, Naupada, Rayagada and Sonapur, National Rural Employment Guarantee Act, 2005 (NREGA) was launched for securing the livelihood of the people in rural areas by guaranteeing 100 days of employment in a financial year to a rural household. It has been decided to cover all rural areas of the country under NREGA with effect from 01.04.2008. The program will include districts which have remained under developed including those in the eastern region of the country. Apart from this, the Backward Regions Grant Fund (BRGF) was also launched in August, 2006 to cover 250 districts including 170 districts identified as backward by the Inter-Ministry Task Group on Redressing Growing Regional Imbalances.

Request of USA to change M& A Regulation

3119. SHRI SANJAY RAUT: Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that USA has requested for changing the new regulations on governing Mergers and Acquisitions (M&A) under the amended Competition Act, including those taking place outside the country;

(b) if so, Government's response thereto; and

(c) the reasons behind such opposition towards Competition Act, particularly M&A rules?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF INDUSTRIAL POLICY AND PROMOTION, MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRI ASHWANI KUMAR):

(a) The Ministry of Corporate Affairs is the nodal Ministry for the Competition Act, 2002. No request from USA Government has been received by Ministry of Corporate Affairs for changing any regulations governing mergers and acquisitions under the amended Competition Act, 2002.

(b) and (c) Questions do not arise.

Ownership rights of land in SEZs

† 3120. SHRI LALIT KISHORE CHATURVEDI: Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND rNDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the land to the investors and developers is being given with the ownership rights in the Special Economic Zones;

(b) whether this system has not been approved by the Parliamentary Committee also and has recommended to give land on lease;

(c) if the industry closes down after the expiry of facility period, what would be the fate of land at that time; and

(d) whether it will not encourage the land mafia indirectly?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE, MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRI JAIRAM RAMESH): (a) A Developer cannot sell land in a Special Economic Zone as per Rule 11(9) of SEZ Rules. For an area to be notified as SEZ, the Developer should have legal possession and irrevocable rights to develop the said area as SEZ. If the Developer has lease hold rights over the identified area, the lease shall be for a period of twenty years or more.

(b) The Parliamentary Committee has recommended that the land acquired by the State Government for SEZ should not be transferred to the Developer and it should be leased out.

(c) As per Rule 11 of the SEZ Rules, the land or built up area in the processing area shall be given on lease only to entrepreneurs holding a valid letter of approval but notwithstanding any condition in the lease deed, the lease rights would cease to exist in case of the expiry or cancellation of the letter of approval.

(d) Does not arise in view of (c) above.

High customs duty on luxury goods

3121. SHRI RAMDAS AGARWAL: Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether unlike China where the import duty on luxury goods were as low as 20 per cent, the customs duty in India is upwards of 45 per cent;

(b) if so, whether Government are contemplating to lower import tariff/rationalized import duties on luxury goods so that Indians may not go abroad and buy goods which is neither good for Government that loses revenue nor for the consumer to pay more; and

t Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.